

Food Safety News

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JBS Unit Again Recalls Banned Beef from Brazil

By Dan Flynn | September 15, 2010

With JBS, SA, the largest beef company on the planet based in Brazil, and Sampco Inc., its export/import operation based in Chicago, one might think the biggest pros in the business could keep meat from one banned Brazilian processing plant from getting into the United States.

But one would be wrong.

For the third time since last May, Sampco has failed to carry out that task. The JBS unit has been forced to undertake a third recall, this one for 258,000 pounds of cooked beef products.

And just as it did June 25, when it recalled 61,000 pounds of cooked and canned and frozen beef products, as well as last May 17, when it recalled 87,000 pounds of canned and boxed corned beef, Sampco took the action because the source of the meat was Brazilian establishment 337.

That's the Brazilian meat processor that was delisted May 6, banned from importing to the United States because "violative levels of the animal drug Ivermectin" were found in its products.

It is a Class III recall, meaning use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences. It is nonetheless, troublesome.

In August, Al Almanza, the top administrator at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, caused a stir when he said the misuse of Ivermectin, a broad-based antiparasitic animal drug, is a "systematic problem" in Brazil.

Brazil supposedly suspended its export of cooked beef products to the U.S. to give American authorities time to investigate. While the recalls for Ivermectin have all been for the same Brazilian processing plant, unacceptable levels have been found in other facilities that ship to the US.

Food & Water Watch, the US-based environmental group, views the animal drug as an imminent public health risk.

As with the other two recalls, each product package bears "BRASIL 337 S.I.F," as well as "Product of Brazil" or "Packed under Brazilian Government Inspection."

USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service recently found that 8 lots of product from Brazilian establishment SIF 337 have been shipped into commerce despite the firm's ineligible status.

Consumers who have purchased any of these products should return them to their point of purchase:

- 12-ounce cans of “Libby Corned Beef” bearing a production code “100315U,” “100316U,” “100322U,” or “100326U.” These products were sent to distribution centers in Florida and Pennsylvania for retail sales.
- 7-ounce pouches “Brushy Creek Shredded Beef” bearing production codes “100121,” “100128,” “100129,” “100308,” or “100322.” These products were sent to distribution centers in Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio for retail sales.
- 10-ounce “Brushy Creek Roast Beef” bearing production codes “100226,” “100309,” or “100311.” These products were sent to distribution centers in California, Missouri, New Jersey, and Texas for retail sales.
- 12-ounce cans of “Kroger Corned Beef” bearing production code “100226U.” These products were sent to distribution centers in Indiana for retail sales. Because the health risk is said to be low, FSIS will likely not release the list of retailers involved, as the agency must do in a Class I recall.

FSIS is responsible for assuring that imported meat, poultry and egg products are safe, wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled and packaged.

FSIS randomly samples products at ports for drug and chemical residues. FSIS routinely conducts recall effectiveness checks to verify recalling firms notify their customers of the recall and that steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers.

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